IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) A method, comprising:

a) providing:

i) an enzymatic cleavage means;

ii) a test nucleic acid substrate containing sequences derived from one or more microorganisms [microorganism]; and

iii) control cleavage products produced by cleavage of a reference nucleic acid [sequence] derived from a microorganism;

b) treating said test nucleic acid substrate under conditions such that said substrate forms one or more intra-strand secondary [cleavage] structures;

c) reacting said cleavage means with said intra-strand secondary [cleavage] structures so that one or more test cleavage products are produced; and

d) comparing said test cleavage products to said control cleavage products.

5. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said test nucleic acid substrate comprises a nucleotide analog.

2. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said test nucleic acid substrate of step (a) is substantially single-stranded.

3. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said test nucleic acid substrate is RNA.

4. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said test nucleic acid substrate is DNA.

10. (Amended) The method of Claim 1, wherein said test nucleic acid substrate of step (a) is double stranded.